

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 03438 160652Z  
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
SSM-03 MCT-01 /076 W  
-----093210 162111Z /64

R 151533Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8386  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
USICA WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PEPR, SOPN, SY, LE  
SUBJ: SYRIAN MEDIA LINK FRANGIEH KILLING TO ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL

1. IN HARSH AND BLUNTLY WORDED EDITORIALS JUNE 14-15 SYRIAN  
PRESS LASHED OUT AT ATTACK ON IHDIN VILLAGE AND SLAYING  
OF TONY FRANGIEH. ATTACK IS PUT IN CONTEXT OF PLOT AGAINST  
LEBANON AND SYRIA BY "FASCIST" AGENTS OF ISRAEL. PRESS IS  
RECALLING FRANGIEH'S REFUSAL TO DEAL WITH ISRAEL AND CLAIMS  
THAT IN TONY'S LAST PRESS STATEMENTS HE CONDEMNED MAJOR  
SAAD HADDAD AS A "TRAITOR." TISHRIIN NOTES THAT THE  
YOUNGER FRANGIEH WAS KILLED "ON THE SAME DAY WHEN ISRAEL  
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TRIED TO PLACE THE DEFECTOR SAAD HADDAD IN CONFRONTATION  
WITH THE LEGITIMATE LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN THE SOUTH...LIKE  
HIS FATHER, TONY FRANGIEH REPRESENTED THE LINE OF ANTI-  
AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND ANTI-ISRAEL NATIONAL POLITICS--  
A LINE THAT IS EAGER FOR SPECIAL FRATERNAL RELATIONS WITH  
SYRIA. IT IS ALSO WELL-KNOWN THAT MR. SULEIMAN FRANGIEH  
IS THE PREEMINENT 'LEBANESE FRONT' POLITICIAN WHO DEPLORED

SADAT'S CAPITULATION." THIS AND OTHER EDITORIALS CLEARLY INTERPRET TONY FRANGIEH'S ASSASSINATION AS A BLOW AGAINST SYRIA AND LEBANON'S INTERNAL STABILITY.

2. THAWRA OF JUNE 15 WARNS THAT "THOSE WHO BELIEVE THEY CAN INFLAME THE SITUATION ONCE AGAIN IN LEBANON ARE UNDER AN ILLUSION." IT ASSERTS THAT THE JUNE 13 ASSASSINATION DATE WAS NOT COINCIDENCE AND IS MEANT TO PREOCCUPY THE LEBANESE PUBLIC WITH SIDE ISSUES IN ORDER TO DIVERT ITS ATTENTION FROM MORE URGENT MATTERS. "THERE IS NOT ANY DOUBT THAT THE ENEMIES OF LEBANON, WITH ISRAEL AND ITS AIDES STOPPING THE LIST, WHEN THEY EMBARKED ON THE CRIMINAL ACT WHICH OCCURRED AT IHDIN WERE PERFECTLY AWARE THAT A RESTORED LEBANON WILL CLASH WITH THEIR STRATEGIC INTERESTS." AL-BAATH OF THE SAME DAY DESCRIBES THE IHDIN ATTACK AS A CAUSE FOR "SHAME AND DISGUST." IT ALSO LINKS THE ISRAELI TURNOVER OF TERRITORY TO SAAD HADDAD'S FORCES WITH THE FRANGIEH MURDER. HADDAD IS CHARACTERIZED AS A "TRAITOR" AND IN THE PREVIOUS DAY'S AL-BAATH EDITORIAL, HADDAD AND HIS MEN ARE REFERRED TO AS "ELEMENTS WHO HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH LEBANON EXPECT THEIR IDENTITY CARDS." THIS SAME EDITORIAL CALLS THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IHDIN ATTACK A "HANDFUL OF PLOTTERS" AND ASKS IF IT IS "RIGHT THAT LEBANON SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE A TOY IN THEIR HANDS."

4. COMMENT: INFORMED SYRIANS ARE DIVIDED OVER WHAT FORM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SYRIA'S RESPONSE TO THESE EVENTS WILL TAKE. THE MAJORITY OF OUR INTERLOCUTORS BELIEVE THAT ASSAD'S PREDILECTION FOR CAUTION AND WELL-CONSIDERED ACTION WILL PREVENT SYRIA FROM OVERREACTING TO THE IHDIN ATTACK BUT RIFAT AND SOME REGIONAL COMMAND MEMBERS ARE REPORTEDLY ENRAGED. VIRTUALLY EVERYONE SEES THE MURDER AS A CHALLENGE TO SYRIA AND EXPECTS THAT SYRIA WILL, WHENEVER POSSIBLE, TILT THE BALANCE TOWARD FRANGIEH'S FOLLOWERS AND EXPLOIT THE NOW OPEN BREAK IN THE LEBANESE FRONT.

PELLETREAU

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, MURDER, TROOP DEPLOYMENT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 jun 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978DAMASC03438  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
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**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780252-0864  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2343111  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SYRIAN MEDIA LINK FARANGIEH KILLING TO ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL  
**TAGS:** PEPR, SOPN, PINS, SY, LE, (FRANGIEH, TONY)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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